

BEFORE THE
POSTAL REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20268-0001

FIRST-CLASS MAIL AND PERIODICALS
SERVICE STANDARD CHANGES, 2021

Docket No. N2021-1

**RESPONSES OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE WITNESS
STEVEN MONTEITH (USPS-T4) TO INTERROGATORIES OF
PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE PR/USPS-T4-1, 3
(May 26, 2021)**

The United States Postal Service hereby provides the response of witness Steven Monteith to the above-listed interrogatories. Each interrogatory is stated verbatim and followed by the response. The remaining interrogatory has been redirected to witness Robert Cintron.

Respectfully submitted,
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

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PR/USPS-T4-1. Please explain how the Postal Service intends to address the public perception that the proposed change will “slow down” the mail.

RESPONSE:

The Postal Service has been and will continue to address the public perception that the proposed changes will “slow down” the mail by increasing awareness as to the proposal’s rationale and value proposition, and the degree by which mail volume will be impacted.

The Postal Service is proposing these changes because we have not met our First-Class Mail service performance targets in eight years due to lack of operational precision and unattainable service standards. By adjusting First-Class Mail service standards by one or two days for certain mail, we can obtain greater operational precision by moving First-Class Mail from air transportation, which is costly and less reliable, to ground transportation. These adjustments will improve reliability and predictability of service for customers, while reducing expenses. Hence, these adjustments will improve the value of mail for all customers.

Most First-Class Mail (61 percent) and Periodicals (93 percent) will be unaffected. First-Class Mail traveling within a local area will continue to be delivered in two days, and most First-Class Mail (70 percent) will continue to be delivered within three days.

The Postal Service has leveraged our extensive set of communication tools to deliver these messages. That is, through our extensive workforce, Postal Customer Councils, Mailer’s Technical Advisory Committee, and online platform,

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we have and will continue to educate the public about how the proposal will provide a reliable, value-driven service, six days a week with 95 percent of all mail delivered on-time, at all times of the year.

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NPPC/USPS-T4-3. Please refer to pages 19-20, lines 18-20 and 1-5, of witness Monteith's testimony. Witness Monteith states that the proposed changes "are unlikely to materially impact the third top driver of customer satisfaction: fast delivery." Witness Monteith's testimony cites a survey included in a United States Postal Service Office of the Inspector General report, which found that 71 percent of respondents expected their sent to mail to arrive in seven days. Witness Monteith finds that this survey "suggests that some customers may not be impacted by the service standard changes as they have already expected longer delivery times than our current service standards."

- a. Please describe any corroborating analysis or information that the Postal Service has reviewed suggesting that mailers believe the current service standard is seven days.
- b. Please confirm that the Postal Service views the survey as a reliable indicator of consumer expectations regarding First-Class Mail delivery time. If confirmed, please explain any steps the Postal Service has taken to improve communication with mailers regarding the service and value being provided under current service standards.

RESPONSE:

- a. I am not aware of any analysis or information corroborating the 2019 USPS OIG survey's finding that "71 percent of respondents expected their sent mail to arrive in seven days."
- b. Confirmed. The Postal Service is always exploring different strategies and processes and soliciting feedback to improve communications with mailers. Specifically, the Postal Service holds twice weekly meetings with Industry in which service and value being provided under current service standards is discussed. Additionally, the Postal Service discusses service and value at the Quarterly Mailers Technical Advisory Committee meetings, the Areas Inspiring Mail meetings, and often covers service and value at the various 142 Postal Customer Council meetings.